

SAINT MARY STAR OF THE SEA, LARGS OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL SUCCOUR, MILLPORT

SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS
1 NOVEMBER 2020

Readings



“My dear people, we are already the children of God
but what we are to be in the future
has not yet been revealed;
all we know is that,
when it is revealed,
we shall be like him
because we shall see him as he really is.”

(1 John 3: 2)

I DESIRE TO DESIRE TO BE A SAINT

Sainthood can seem an unattainable dream when we think of ourselves as candidates. The daily experience of our moral fragility and weakness can appear to put to rest any notion of such an exalted aim. But to accept that is to buy into a ploy of the evil spirit whose sole purpose is to rubbish us, to point relentlessly the finger of accusation against us and to hoodwink us into believing that holiness and sainthood are simply not for us.

So, we have to call the evil spirit's bluff, as we have to call the bluff of the narrative we so often tell ourselves that we are second or third rate Catholics or even human beings. The FACT is that our constitution as human beings is made for sainthood. The FACT is that we are not defined by our failures unless we fail to redefine ourselves positively. The FACT is that our baptism has already sanctified us and given us the task to work that sanctification out and into our whole selves by the daily grind of living according to the will of God. The FACT is that no-one gets through the pearly gates who is not a saint. If you arrive at them without sanctity, you will be shown to the ante-chamber where Love in Person will make you ready. Those who don't want sanctity won't even arrive at the gates. They have preferred somewhere else. They have believed the ploy.

But, you might well say, another FACT is that I feel so far away. How can I be like St. Dismas, St. Augustine or St. Francis of Assisi, St. Thomas Becket or St. Ignatius of Loyola? How can I be like St. Mary of Egypt, St. Angela of Foligno or St. Olga? Why on earth have these names been picked? Because they were all terrible sinners at one time. In fact, you could take every deadly or mortal sin ever committed and you will find that there is a saint who once was like that! Being a saint does not mean that you were never a sinner. Some of the worst sinners have become the greatest saints.

Why should you or I be any different, then? We're not. What we're lacking is perhaps the will, the commitment, the desire. Maybe to say, "I want to be a saint" sounds like too much. OK. How about, "I would like to be a saint"? Still too much? How about, "I desire to be a saint"? Even that too much? How about, "I desire to desire to be a saint"? God can work even with that. The Solemnity of All Saints (whose ranks probably include many people you have known and loved) ought to stir us deeply to a holy envy, to an awakening of the truest and best within us, to ask the Lord God for the desire to desire to be holy, to seek holiness, to work for it, to treasure it. Given what Christ suffered so that we could become holy, surely that's the least we can do?

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading

1 John 3:1-3

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us,
by letting us be called God's children;
and that is what we are.

Because the world refused to acknowledge him,
therefore it does not acknowledge us.

My dear people, we are already the children of God
but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed;
all we know is, that when it is revealed
we shall be like him
because we shall see him as he really is.

Surely everyone who entertains this hope
must purify himself, must try to be as pure as Christ.

Responsorial Psalm 23(24):1-6

Such are the men who seek your face, O Lord.

Gospel

Matthew 5:1-12a

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

'How happy are the poor in spirit;
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy the gentle:
they shall have the earth for their heritage.

Happy those who mourn:
they shall be comforted.

Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right:
they shall be satisfied.

Happy the merciful:
they shall have mercy shown them.

Happy the pure in heart:
they shall see God.

Happy the peacemakers:
they shall be called sons of God.

Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right:
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

‘Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Preface to the Eucharistic Prayer

The glory of Jerusalem, our mother

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For today by your gift we celebrate the festival of your city,
the heavenly Jerusalem, our mother,
where the great array of our brothers and sisters
already gives you eternal praise.

Towards her, we eagerly hasten, as pilgrims advancing by faith,
rejoicing in the glory bestowed upon those exalted members of the Church
through whom you give us, in our frailty, both strength and good example...

Communion Antiphon

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called children of God.
Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.